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An analysis of fear and prejudice was made through a series of attitude questionnaires, private interviews conducted by trained psychologists, and a series of psychological tests.

Results showed that prejudice started in the first few years of a child's life through his relationship with his parents. The adults low in prejudice had stable outlooks on life, and realized that all human beings were not infallible. A lack of love and security could usually be found in the backgrounds of prejudiced people; because of this insecurity, they perpetually exaggerated the importance of authority. They had a need to belong that made them criticize and ostracize others.

Economic insecurity was often at the root of an individual's prejudice. Lack of money was compounded by the lack of affection and understanding. Thus resentment towards the "grasping" and "acquisitive" nature of the Jews stemmed from a feeling that money made the man. The individual who was the superpatriot or the antipatriot would assume either role to expose all of society's weak spots, thereby diverting attention from his own.

Prejudice can be reduced by accepting the harsh facts concerning the world, one's country, and oneself. In the area of parent-child relationships sympathy, understanding, and acceptance of oneself and of others should be learned by the child early enough so as to become permanent character traits. Communication between parents, teachers, community organization, and legislation should be increased.

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PREJUDICE AND MENTAL HEALTH

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FEAR AND PREJUDICE

BY SELMA HIRSH

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLET NO. 245

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introduction

The book, THE FEARS MEN LIVE BY, published in 1955 by Harper & Brothers, was based upon the distinguished and authoritative five-volume, STUDIES IN PREJUDICE. Sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and published in 1950-51 by Harper & Brothers, these STUDIES brought together the results of years of painstaking research by psychiatrists, psychologists, social and political scientists, offering an impressive body of evidence on the origins and the nature of the prejudiced personality.

Several thousand men and women participated in these research studies. They came from every walk of life and different income brackets. There were teachers, housewives, servicemen, and veterans just released from army duty. There were university students, business executives, laborers, and white-collar workers. To discern possible relationships between prejudice and mental disturbance, more than a hundred patients from mental institutions were included in the study. To explore links between anti-social attitudes of some criminals and specific attitudes of prejudice, over a hundred inmates from San Quentin Prison were also studied. Because of the scientists' special interest in anti-Semitism and anti-Negro prejudice, however, all participants were white, and either Protestant or Catholic.

In their investigations the scientists used all the tools of their respective trades. Starting out with attitude questionnaires resembling the familiar opinion polls, they followed these with private interviews conducted by trained psychologists. Finally, they used a series of psychological tests in which an individual unwittingly "gives himself away." None of these techniques was new, of course, but here, for the first time, they were used jointly in the study of individual character.

When all the results were assembled from questionnaires, interviews, and special tests, the evidence appeared indisputable: by the sum of their responses, prejudiced individuals proclaimed their boundless fear. Whether banker, student, housewife or laborer, prisoner or mental patient, the prejudiced presented a monotonously oppressive self-portrait: they were struggling incessantly against long odds and "tough breaks," experiencing innumerable defeats – all because of events they could not possibly prevent, or because of people who were out deliberately to do them harm.

Their prejudices were never isolated attitudes. These people hated not just one kind of person but many kinds of people. In short, their prejudices were but an extension of their entire philosophy of life.

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* It would be unwarranted to assume that the explanation offered by the STUDIES or in this interpretation of them are the *only* explanations there are for the existence of prejudice. They are not, of course.

FEAR AND PREJUDICE

BY SELMA HIRSH

This pamphlet was excerpted, with the publisher's permission, from THE FEARS MEN LIVE BY, *referred to on the opposite page. The author, Selma Hirsh, has had nearly twenty years of experience in writing, teaching, and public relations in the fields of education, science, and human relations. . . . The drawings in this pamphlet are by Elizabeth D. Logan.*

TODAY, fear is an inescapable emotion of all thoughtful people. Certainly in their current anxiety Americans have much in common with most of Western civilization. But the fears with which we are here concerned transcend these times: they predate them and they may even outlive them.

We might, in fact, trace some of our present apprehension almost to the earliest history of America. For in the story of our country's growth, and in the development of our industrial genius may be found the beginnings of many of the conflicts that bother us and the fears that invade us today. Here are the beginnings of the contradictory commandments now so firmly woven into our culture that we hardly know which, indeed, we are *truly* to heed. Our public declarations of brotherhood? Or our private ambitions that urge us to surpass our brothers? Back and forth we shuttle between public creed and private need never knowing precisely when to decry, and when to reward, the aggressive amongst us.

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Some of the more far-reaching effects of this, for example, are observable on any sunny afternoon on any park bench in any city in the United States. There sit young mothers, each desperately anxious to rear her young one to be tough enough, yet not too tough; to play fair, but not get pushed around; to be considerate of others but to "look out for himself." Consequently the clashing admonitions she shouts from her perch sound something like this: "Don't stand there—hit him back!" "Leave him alone—he's smaller than you are!" "Stand up to him or he'll take *all* your toys!" "Don't start anything—I saw you push him!" "He's bigger than you are—keep away."

She is never sure, really, whether what she is saying makes sense. Maybe in this competitive world of ours the boy *ought* to be tough. But then, what mother wants to raise her son to be a lout? In the compromises she finally settles upon, she has much in common with her maternal ancestors who were responsible for raising generation after generation of young men able to fight admirably, but reluctantly, whenever someone tried to push them around.

There is also our American success system, the ladder up which all but the incompetent or the unworthy are expected to scamper. There is the perpetual climb to mythical heights and the perpetual pursuit of dreams, however unrealistic they may be. Ours is a land of colossal expectations—and the disappointments are in direct proportion.

Where the possibilities *seem* to be limitless, where success is relative and competition intense, fear of one another is fanned incessantly. There is constant temptation to explain one's failures in such a way as to keep one's vanity intact: by blaming them on anyone and anything but oneself. There is also great need for security and little chance of attaining it. There is profound loneliness. And there are endless crowds.

In recent times particularly, crowd-mindedness has been described as the prevailing fever among Americans. In many of our communities conformity has actually become synonymous with

good citizenship. Today in many places, the popular has become the typical, the typical has become the customary, the customary has become the correct and—finally—the *only* acceptable action.

But if this fear of the different be the prevailing fever, why is it that although the fever is all around us, only some succumb to it while others appear resistant, even immune?

the scientists investigate

A decade ago a group of scientists in the field of human behavior asked themselves these questions. Though their intention was to study prejudice, their plan was to study individual personality, since in the same environment all of us do not behave in the same way, or yield in the same degree to the pressures around us.

The scientists were interested in investigating the well-springs of these individual responses. Accordingly, they examined not only the *attitudes* of the prejudiced but the crucial events and the critical experiences in their lives. They inquired into the way these people felt about themselves as well as about others, and how they felt about life generally. They probed into their memories, opinions, hopes, and fears. And in this way they discovered many things about the nature and the molding of the prejudiced personality.

Their findings, until yesterday known only to scholars, throw light on the cause and the course of the prevailing fear-fever.

Their findings are the essence of this pamphlet.

HOW IT STARTS

In countless ways fears experienced at the age of four may be seen shaping the thoughts and guiding the acts of the forty-year-old.

Especially revealing were the descriptions some of the men and women studied gave of themselves as children. Those who currently paraded a puritanism for which they were hardly suited, loved to tell what holy terrors they *had* been. Those now painfully frugal were eager to recall what spend-thrifts they *were*.

Those who today feared the demands of love more than they desired it—how anxious they were to tell of the days of their youth when ardor was unrestrained and they were forever playing the role of Romeo!

relationship to parents

Whenever the prejudiced "remembered Mama," they seemed determined to make her what a "Mom" should be. She was cited repeatedly for her self-sacrifice, her devotion, her goodness, and not infrequently for her beauty. Father was recalled as the family provider—either good or bad—and in terms of the iron hand with which he ruled, or failed to rule, his roost. To the question "What were your parents like?" the highly prejudiced usually replied by describing what they *looked like* and what they had given to their children in material comforts and physical care.

The prejudiced were the first to admit that from their earliest beginnings they became intimate not with love, but with fear. For oddly enough, although their parents were often "ideal," and frequently "the best one could ask for," the childhood they recalled was never ideal nor even a remote second best. The narratives of their youth were shrill with resentment. If there were sisters or brothers, they, not the narrator, were preferred by the parents—though the narrator was by far the most amiable of them all. At school he was diligent, often keen, but the teacher bullied or ignored him. On the ball field he was incredibly swift, but the coach unreasonably passed him over. Though he knew and admired many nice girls, youths less noble and worthy than he always won them.

Since the memory of childhood weakness was nearly the bitterest memory of all, it was from this the prejudiced seemed particularly determined to flee. In every way he could think of, now that he was adult, he was anxious to align himself with the strong and to demonstrate as often as he could, his right to be there. He spoke proudly of his toughness and related countless incidents to prove his ruthlessness. He was quick to condemn and eager to punish any and all who, unlike himself, had failed to "outgrow" their weakness.

The endless "must-nots" remembered from his childhood were the must-nots he now imposed upon others. The penalties he now exacted from others were the penalties that had once been exacted from him. In fact, if there was one thing the prejudiced seemed certain of it was this: he must punish others as others had once punished him. Only by inflicting cruelties upon others, can he wipe out the memory of cruelties once unjustly inflicted upon him.

love and security

It was generally different for those low in prejudice. The tales they told of their early years frequently echoed joy and confidence, warmth and security. Often they, too, recalled anger over past injustices; but these never seemed to rankle permanently. It did not make them anxious to become the dispensers of future injustices any more than the sorrows they poignantly remembered made them inhospitable to future joys.

Those low in prejudice were more inclined to remember the love, affection, and understanding in their homes than the comforts they had lacked or possessed. If they stressed some qualities of their parents, these were the unique and not the conventional ones, that is, their unusual interests, their rare hobbies, their special talents.

Being neither distressed nor embarrassed by the shortcomings of their parents, they often described these with humor, or with the quick sympathy that is close to the core of love. For the adults low in prejudice had long ago come to realize that all humans are fallible. To recognize and to speak of their parents' imperfections seemed to make those parents not less, but much more human. These same persons seemed to have little difficulty remembering the times when "right" and "wrong" came clearly into focus. Usually, they would recall, when discipline was imposed in their childhood, sympathy was not far off. The rules they remembered, moreover, were principles and guides for future action rather than punishments for past acts and deterrents from later ones. Although the reasons for the rules were generally quite clear, the low in prejudice often recalled occasions on which they were permitted to

question them, even to experiment with them. It was in this way that they had learned the variety of situations to which rules might apply—and the possibility of exceptions as well. And finally, because the authority they had known in their childhood had been reasonable and even comforting, the low-prejudiced adults rarely seemed impelled either to defy or worship all authorities later in their lives.

Looking back upon childhood through the eyes of many now adult, we can see how indelible are those earliest markings; and as we are able to make note of those experiences that marked the beginnings of fear, we cannot help but become more clear-sighted about the beginnings of prejudice as well.

the bitter end: the authoritarian personality

Grownups will often translate their memories into foregone conclusions. For example, the adult who recalled that whenever he had waited for anything as a child, his waiting had ended in punishment or disappointment, now seemed to live in fear of disaster.

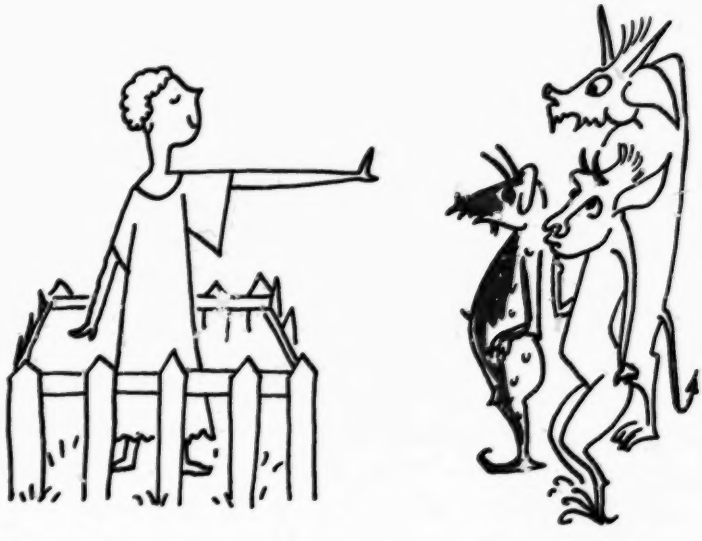
Waiting for his army assignment, he is certain it will be a wretched one; waiting for his girl, he is sure she will disappoint him. Waiting for a promotion, he is certain it will not come. Waiting for a stranger, he is convinced he will find an enemy.

Because the new experiences in his adult life so often become mixed with memories of his first and fearful childhood experiences, these, too, seemed destined to failure. A new job would be linked with the terrifying first day at school; a new girl with the miserably unsuccessful first date; a new home with the unhappy time long ago when his family had to move to a totally strange place.

Because long ago the unknown and unfamiliar proved consistently terrifying, now all his new adult undertakings frighten much more than they challenge him. For his early experience has assured him of nothing but the certainty of misery and failure; and now, whether it is a new feeling or a new face, a new idea or new place, the prejudiced person generally tries frantically to avoid them all.

Since most of his memories are concerned with his need for protection and belonging, most of his adult thoughts are laced through with the desire for safety and security and the determination to exclude others as others had once excluded him.

But how is he to find this security? How can he be certain that at last he "belongs" unless he can point to many around him who do *not*? How can he be sure that he is finally on "the inside," unless all around him are those he can identify as "outsiders"?



How is he to identify "outsiders"? Distinctions, he insists, must be made. Lines must be sharply drawn between those who are like himself and those who are not. Those who are most like himself are the good, the moral, the diligent. Those who are different are the bad, the immoral, the lazy. Other "clear-cut" distinctions are also necessary for him: Gentiles must be distinguished from Jews, Protestants from Catholics, white from colored, and yellow from all other colors. White-collar workers must be distinguished from laborers, non-union men from union men, workers from bosses. Native born must be distinguished from foreign born; first-generation Americans from fifth-generation Americans—and all Americans from all non-Americans.

Such persons were also given to making sweeping generalizations:

"All politicians are corrupt. . . ."

"All business men are out to make a fast buck. . . ."

"All bosses are out to milk the workers. . . ."

"All unions are out to break the bosses. . . ."

"All Jews are greedy—the greed is in their bones. . . ."

"All Negroes are untrustworthy—the stealth is in their blood. . . ."

To exclude those who are different from themselves—which is the only road they know to security—they cannot simply *criticize some*, they must *ostracize many*. It is understandable, therefore, that they should be eager to see the worst in everyone and be easily persuaded that it is there.

Because of their insecurity, moreover, they perpetually exaggerated the importance of authority. They did not accept only that authority they believed to be justified, they submitted to all authority they believed to be strong. That is why the scientists speak of them as "authoritarian" personalities.

The authoritarian's justification for his love of power was to be found in his view of life. Prevailing evils were his favorite subjects. He spoke incessantly of violence and disaster, crime and punishments, conflicts between the strong and the weak, the good and the bad. His conversations were dotted with observations on the importance of being "realistic," but for him this was simply another way of saying that human nature being what it is, and the world being as it is, what else but chaos can one expect? And how else, they ask, except through power can order be established?

Of course, the boundaries that separate authoritarian from nonauthoritarian personalities are fluid. There is no such thing as the "average authoritarian" any more than there is an "average human being." Nevertheless, such personalities have many things in common not only with respect to their past experiences but also in terms of their present behavior.

One of their most insistent needs, for example, is the need to "belong." One of their most insistent impulses, therefore, is the impulse to conform. Consequently they are apt to resemble one another noticeably in the ways they think and feel and act. *To be as much alike as possible is not merely their goal but indeed their only source of security.*

In our society the goals of such individuals receive automatic encouragement. For the premium now is on conformity and the reward for conformity is comfort and belonging. The cost of such comfort, however, is the right to think and to act independently. But to the authoritarian personality this is no cost at all, for his fear of independence greatly exceeds his desire for it—and his need for "belonging" is more profound than his other needs.

PREJUDICE AND THE NEGRO

All of us are plagued by fears; no one is without them. Where we differ from one another is in the extent to which they take possession of us, in the degree of our awareness of them, and in the strange things we do because of them.

Some people, as we have seen, cling frantically to their prejudices to avoid facing their fears. Others try to quiet them with alcohol or to flaunt them in criminal or delinquent exploits. Some even attempt to mask them in a physical ailment. Some succumb to their fears altogether and become mentally ill.

Of all these maladies most of us would consider prejudice, the conversion of fear into hate, as the least serious. Yet the American variety of prejudice is far from harmless, and though it may seem more respectable than alcoholism and criminality, it is not really very different from either of these. For all may be, and frequently are, flights from one's self and one's fears.

In our own time and in our own way of life, for example, often the best way to achieve recognition for ourselves is to tear down those around us; and sometimes the only way we can possibly keep ourselves in the clear is to cast shadows on someone else. How much more surefooted we might be in our own struggling ascent if we could hate those we abuse! And if we can prove that the abuse they receive is the abuse they merit, how then can we possibly keep from hating them?

The way many fair-skinned Americans feel about the Negro illustrates this. For as fear will often breed hate, so does it invite cau-

tion as to whom and what is to be hated. And while all minority groups have traditionally been favored targets for hostility, the sociologists tell us that in a country where there are several minority groups, *the one most different in appearance from the majority is considered to be the safest target of all.* It is also the group, the psychologists tell us, upon whom the majority usually vents its deepest fears.

The deepest fears of many white Americans are those surrounding their determination to "be good." They are caught in a constant conflict between their instincts and their reason. The stronger their "bad" impulses, the greater the wish to disown them—and the more difficult it is to do so.

One way to make it appear that one is rid of these impulses is to censure them in others—and in fact, in the very act of doing so, one is often helped to curb them in oneself. For example, to call another dirty is to make ourselves—as well as others—conscious of our cleanliness. To call another lazy is to suggest that we are diligent. If those we accuse look as different from us as possible, our accusations sound all the more convincing, For if one *looks* different, then is it not to be assumed that one also *acts* differently? "If *he* possesses such unconscionable traits, then I who am so different from him, most assuredly do *not*!"

Those in search of such a foil would hardly overlook the Negro, for he is qualified on two counts: his difference and his darkness.

The Negro is black in a culture that associates blackness with evil, and whiteness with purity and goodness. "Dirty black" is so commonly run together that it requires almost a special learning process to separate one word from the other. This is true as well of "light and bright," "dark and dreary," and countless other expressions.

In a special study of white, Anglo-Saxon veterans (to discover whether their war experiences had affected their feelings about minorities) more than half were frankly hostile toward Negroes, and their explanations for this were nearly always riveted to the Negroes' alleged immorality. They would take the interviewer the breadth of the globe—far beyond their own experience—to prove how insatiable were the Negroes' physical appetites.

Evidence to refute their contentions would be steadfastly rejected. When the interviewer introduced records of outstanding bravery and exceptional fighting on the part of Negroes, these would be dubbed by the prejudiced as "out-and-out propaganda"; or it was asserted that "the few good fighters were the exceptions" and that there were "damned few, at that"; or the Negroes' ability to kill the enemy was seen as consummate proof of "the innate murderer in every last one of them."

Of 150 middle-class veterans (all previously enlisted men) more than 80 per cent admitted, however reluctantly, that Negroes had their "rights." Close to that number thought that they should have greater educational and employment opportunities and better—though separate—housing. Five out of ten said they would be willing to work next to a Negro on an equal basis (as compared to nine out of ten who were willing to work with Jews).

When the contemplated equality moved into the more personal areas, however, the statistics all but collapsed. Only one out of ten was willing to live next door to a Negro (although eight out of ten would live next door to a member of a white minority group); and nine out of ten emphatically disapproved of Negroes and whites "mixing together socially."

Whenever white-skinned minorities were discussed, it was generally conceded, however grudgingly, that eventually they would be-

come an indistinguishable part of the majority. It was often suggested that members of these groups ought to shed their "different customs," that they ought to learn to dress, to act, and to behave "like everybody else"—the implication being that the sooner they did this, the sooner would their assimilation be achieved.

No such eventuality was admitted where the Negro was concerned. In fact, the fear of it provided the ultimate argument in favor of restricting the Negro's mobility and hence his equality.

Those who were opposed to any and all forms of social equality, including integrated housing, appeared to have no difficulty in reconciling their views with their understanding of democracy. "After all," they would declare, "we're not depriving them of anything but the right to mingle with us—and who, after all, wants his sister to marry a Negro?"

In his widely heralded book, *The American Dilemma**, Gunnar Myrdal concludes that "we cannot avoid observing that *what white people really want is to keep the Negroes in a lower status*," and the arguments against social equality are but rationalizations to achieve this. They may *say*, "no social equality because this will cause intermarriage." They will *mean*, "no intermarriage because this will bring about equality."

what is said is not what is meant

There are, then, many reasons for the suppression of the Negro that were not apparent in the explanations given by the prejudiced. The reasons reside in the white men and in American society itself; but the explanations were uniformly affixed to the Negro.

It was explained by the prejudiced, for example, that Negroes were "child-like"; that as they shared none of the restraints of decent people neither did they share their social or economic ambitions. Negroes, it was claimed, are happy the "way they are."

It was said that the Negroes are dirty and take no pride in their appearance; that they are innately stupid—fit for nothing but

* See *The Negro in America*, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 95, which is a summary of Gunnar Myrdal's book.

the most menial tasks. It was maintained that Negroes have "no sense of values," that they lack "self-respect," that they are hapless and planless. Even such virtues as the Negro was alleged to possess —his love of children, his enjoyment of the "simple pleasures," the "animal-like" devotion of which he was presumed to be capable— these were used to support, never to challenge, what was implicit, namely, that for the Negro, slavery is a perfect vocation.

In the more extensive interviews, however, the arguments often shifted. Where before the Negro was contemptible because of his weakness, now he was insufferable because of his arrogance. Where before he was hopelessly stupid, now he was dangerous when he is educated for then "nothing is good enough for him." Where before the Negro was without ambition and eminently content with his lot, now it was argued that "he wants nothing more than to be where the whites are." "Give him a finger and he'll take a hand." "Give him a job with whites and the first thing you know the colored are taking over and the whites are out on the street."

"keeping him in his place"

It mattered little what, exactly, was said so long as somehow the notion was kept alive that the Negro deserves his confinement. For at the heart of all these arguments is the conviction that the status of the Negro *must not be improved.* Once the Negro is permitted to leave his "place," the prejudiced white man can no longer be certain of his own position; for such a person finds his place only by keeping others in theirs, and he proves himself only by declaring his superiority over them.

Only as long as the Negro is nobody, can he, the prejudiced, be somebody.

If the Negro often seems to be molded in the image his enemies have of him, it is not because that image is preordained. It is because the American Negro lives in painful intimacy with the notion of his inferiority. It is in his history and in his present being. It is on the lips of those who raise him and in the faces of those who deal with him. It is in the epithets that are hurled at him,

and in the numberless places that refuse him entry. It is in the roles in which he is cast in films, plays, and novels. It is sealed in the reality of his inferior job and his inferior home.

But it is *not* inborn. Countless studies of pre-school youngsters both colored and white have revealed that, given comparable health and environmental situations, the children prove equal in intelligence. Moreover, at pre-school age Negro youngsters regularly reveal character traits vastly different from the stereotype of Negro adults: they are sensitive, quick, ambitious, and energetic.

Actually, when the highly prejudiced and those low in prejudice talked about the Negro, they did not differ greatly in their description of his present condition. They moved apart sharply, however, in their explanations for it. When those low in prejudice looked at the Negro, they perceived instantly the effect of discrimination. When the prejudiced observed him, they saw only conclusive proof of his inferiority.

This selective vision of the highly prejudiced serves him well. He sees only sinners and savages, and one is expected to bar *them* from the company of the civilized and virtuous. If one sees victims and suffering, one is expected to help. But the highly prejudiced person cannot really help anyone until he begins to help himself. For if he could have reduced his own torment in the first place, he would very probably not now be finding it necessary to torment others.

Thus it is that the fear that induced the white man's prejudice grows because of it. The added fear strengthens the prejudice; the prejudice reinforces the restrictions; the restrictions increase the resentment of the Negro and multiply the guilt of the white man. The chain is now complete. Its ends are looped; and it shackles equally all who helped to forge it.

A WALL AGAINST OTHERS

Those whose fears impel them to hate are rarely satisfied with only one hate and they usually have no difficulty sustaining quite a few at the same time. Such people, however, often seem to have a "pet hate" and this, as we might now suspect, is likely to be associated with their "pet fear." Some, for example, are much more anxious about *making* good than about *being* good: economic insecurity troubles them far more than the restlessness of their instincts. Apparently, such people are apt to find the Jew an especially inviting quarry.

The stereotypes that prevail with respect to the Jews are so numerous that anyone seeking a reason to justify his ill feeling would have no trouble finding one. Jews are disliked because they are bankers or because they are beggars; because they are revolutionaries or all-powerful industrialists; because they are "too clannish" or because they are "forever trying to get in where they don't belong"; because they are too intellectual or too business-minded; too material or too spiritual; too weak or too strong.

But although the charges hurled at them are shot through with contradictions, there are some that seem to recur with particular fervor and frequency. Whereas the Negro was upbraided for lacking such solid American virtues as thrift, ambition, and shrewdness, the Jew was condemned for possessing these virtues to an excessive degree. In short, where hostility against the Negro was routinely rationalized to justify *holding him down*, attacks against the Jew seemed more often calculated to *pull him down* from an exalted economic or intellectual position.

But the "uncanny superiority" of the Jew, like "the innate inferiority" of the Negro, regularly turned out to be an image perceived through the lens of fear. The adults who were most critical of Jews for not behaving like "everybody else" were also the ones who insisted in their questionnaires that "no matter how Americanized a

Jew might seem to be, there is always something different and strange, something basically Jewish underneath. . . ." Their proposals to solve "the Jewish problem" were embroidered around the necessity for Jews to make themselves less obtrusive—to avoid "going where they're not wanted" and to "stop trying to imitate Gentiles."

They would require, in short, that the Jews cease trying to be different but also stop trying to act like Gentiles; that they learn to behave like everybody else, but that one must realize that they cannot, really, because "a Jew never loses his Jewishness"; that they become thoroughly Americanized, but that one must "be careful about allowing them in everywhere, for too many Jews in a neighborhood, in a school, in a business, and even in the country, might have dire consequences for all concerned."

It was patently clear, in other words, that those most insistent that the Jews liquidate their Jewishness, were the very ones who would make it impossible for them to do so.

economic insecurity

As the scientists explored the depth and breadth of the anti-Jewish prejudice in our country, their findings revealed a tie-up between economic anxiety and anger toward Jews. Such anxiety was traceable to *feelings*—not to *facts*. Some of those who were most insecure and most anxious about the future, for example, were actually holding better positions than they had ever held and even confessed to being better situated financially than they had ever been.

There seemed little doubt but that the economic insecurity so characteristic of the highly prejudiced was related not to present circumstances but to remembered ones. And further study usually revealed that the memories that provoked the anxiety were not of economic deprivation but of emotional impoverishment.

In the childhood of the prejudiced and economically insecure there were commodities that had been far scarcer than money, namely, warmth and affection, tenderness and understanding. It was startling to see how persuasive those earliest memories could be.

For the adults who recalled mainly desolation and deprivation in their youth seemed to find it exceedingly difficult to feel anything but deprived and desolate many years later, no matter how much improved were their circumstances.

What the prejudiced person had to say about the Jews revealed much more about himself than it did about his declared enemies. For the very persons who were most scathing about the "money-mindedness," the "grasping" and "acquisitive" nature of the Jews, had agreed emphatically with the questionnaire statement that "financial success is an important measure of the man," that "every child should learn the value of money early," and that "the business man is more important to society than the artist."

Whatever the mental device and whatever the reasons for it, it was apparent from his own testimony that there were no qualities the prejudiced admired more than "burning ambition," "smartness," "push," and "know-how." For all who possessed them he was filled with envy and veneration—unless the possessors happened to be Jews, and then he was filled only with anger.

the super-patriot and the anti-patriot

We have seen the extremes to which some people will go to avoid the discovery of their own shortcomings. We have seen, for example, how they will cling to the flimsiest of evidence to prove that Jews, Negroes, foreigners, bureaucrats—anyone and everyone but themselves—are responsible for their difficulties.

It should not surprise us, therefore, to find that though the prejudiced personality may limber up on minority groups it is in the playground of politics that he really stretches his limbs. Here in the dress of a wide-awake citizen he can deplore and decry to his heart's content. Here, assuming the posture of a devoted patriot—and in the company of the most respected patriots—he can assiduously expose all of society's weak spots, thereby diverting attention from his own.

Earlier investigations had turned up some evidence to suggest that the highly prejudiced were more likely to espouse the con-

servative than the liberal viewpoint on political and economic matters. The scientists were anxious to discover whether this alleged relationship actually existed, and they attempted, therefore, to measure the conservatism or liberalism of an equal number of those who had scored "high" and those who had scored "low" on the questionnaires having to do with minority group prejudice. Their data, however, yielded no definitive conclusions, for while many of the highly prejudiced were of conservative persuasion, some were not. And while most of those "low" in prejudice appeared to support the liberal viewpoint, a number were to be found defending the conservative position.

In fact, it was not the *substance* but the *rigidity* of their beliefs that distinguished the authoritarians from the non-authoritarians. Whether they favored unions or opposed them; whether they urged more free enterprise or none at all; whether they spoke for social change or against it, the authoritarians and highly prejudiced stated their positions unconditionally. They could neither admit nor imagine any other position but their own.

When they discussed public issues, they rarely spoke of the *principles* that pertained to them; they always spoke of the *dangers* implicit in them. They rarely spoke of *values;* they always spoke of *costs.* No matter what they talked about, they would criticize more than they would praise; they would punish more than they would reward; they would wreck more than they would preserve.

Whether he used the language of the conservative or that of the liberal, the prejudiced personality seemed to measure his patriotism by the number of dangers he could identify and attack. Similarly, he would judge the patriotism of others not by the confidence they expressed in — or truly felt about — their country, but by the evil they could discover within its boundaries.

In his conversations about politics with the interviewers, the highly prejudiced would miss no opportunity to tell of unrest and discontent throughout the land. He would relate in liveliest detail, stories of confusion among public officials, deceitfulness among elected representatives, ignorance among the leaders of our own and other countries. He would offer this information as if it were a contribution, savoring its tragedy as if it were a comedy.

In striking contrast were the attitudes recorded during interviews with most of those low in prejudice, the non-authoritarians. Much more often than not, their starting point was their faith in their country and their profound commitment to democracy. Whether they explained this faith and this commitment in terms of their "liberalism" or their "conservatism," they reasoned that the best way to protect democracy was to practice it, not to demolish it.

They would not urge increased taxation in order to "punish the well-to-do," nor would they oppose it because they were "tired of pouring their hard-earned money down the drain." They would support additional taxation if they approved the purpose for which it was required; otherwise they would oppose it. Conservative or liberal, the non-authoritarians sought protection for the individual not suppression of him, an extension of freedom not a diminution of it. When they expressed any fear—and they often did—it was a fear *for* democracy and not *of* it.

REDUCING PREJUDICE

Travelling with the experts through their separate realms of social and psychological theories, we come upon surprisingly many areas of common ground as to the origins and consequences of prejudice.

There is agreement that from the cradle to the grave we are encouraged in our prejudices and that these grow as the child grows and flourish in the minds of men as long as their surroundings provoke them and their environment stimulates them.

There is agreement that intensely prejudiced people are angry people, having issued from a childhood where hope was unavail-

ing and pain unending. But the prejudiced are also fearful people, and they are not likely to express their prejudices unless popular belief confirms them—or unless they are sure it is "safe" to do so. Therefore they will lash out at those who are weaker than they are —or at those whom a great many other people also dislike.

Finally, there is agreement that the victims of prejudice have little to do with the cause of it. They are likely to be people whom a tragic combination of circumstances has rendered both accessible and vulnerable and therefore eminently suited for victimization.

The task now at hand is the reduction of prejudice—not decades from now but in our own generation; not only in those who are young and still growing, but among those now fully grown; not only in the people around us, but even in ourselves.

accept the unalterable

If we are to approach this task realistically, then at the outset we must accept a hard set of facts concerning the world, our country, and ourselves.

In addition to the fear-laden atmosphere that embraces so much of the world, we must realize that there are many special elements in our American atmosphere to spur our antipathies toward one another. Earlier we noted the inescapable dilemma of a people confronted with a profoundly impelling creed and equally impelling reasons to forget it. Thus, prejudice and inequities are often doggedly defended in the name of individual freedom. Individual freedom, it is frequently declared, must include the freedom to hate, to exclude, and to discriminate.

Most of us, as far back as we can remember, heard with pride of the great past of our country. We learned that it was made glorious and mighty by the blending of many cultures and nationalities; that it was a country where differences were merged by the miraculous solvent known as freedom; that it was this fact more than any other that bestowed upon our land its unique vitality.

Throughout the studies, however, this notion seemed alive with irony. For wherever there were differences, there was fear and—

inevitably—hostility. Moreover, while there appeared to be an acute fear of those who were obviously different, there was also a chronic and gnawing fear of those who *might* be different but who could not readily be identified as such: the light Negro "who could easily pass," the Jew "who looked like everyone else," the next-door neighbor of same faith and skin, who, because he "buried himself in books," seemed "strangely different from the rest of us."

In a country teeming with differences, this nameless and pervasive fear of those who are "different" is among the most challenging and disturbing of the scientists' disclosures.

Finally, we must realize that those who are most prejudiced would be the last to admit that fact, or even to recognize it. They will produce endless arguments to prove the reasonableness of their hostility and hear no evidence that might disprove their contentions. There is no end to the tricks their eyes and ears perform so that they may see only those things they wish to see, and hear only those things they wish to hear.

The prejudiced, we know now, are often people with overdeveloped fears and underdeveloped consciences. They do not mean to lie about others; they mean only to keep from knowing the facts about themselves.

change the changeable

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is older he will not depart from it." So it is stated in the Book of Proverbs; and this also is one of the main conclusions of these investigations.

These point to the great need for expanding parent education programs which will be attentive not only to the details of child-raising but to the principles of it as well. For although these principles are by now well known to students of human behavior, they are not as well understood by those who have the job of raising children.

The lessons in the area of parent-child relationships are reducible to a single lesson, namely, that sympathy, understanding, acceptance of oneself and therefore of others must be learned in childhood if they are to become permanent character traits. *They can be learned there, however, only if they are experienced there.* Sometimes, to be sure, they are acquired later in life and belatedly tacked on to one's personality. But then they are worn almost as ornaments, and like ornaments their use may be dictated by fashion and convenience—either one being sufficient reason to order their discard.

If all parents were to learn and to apply this lesson to the upbringing of their young, we would be attacking prejudice at its roots. But we cannot count too heavily upon this approach to achieve a significant reduction in prejudice in the near future. Since we are not to be allowed to wait around for generations to observe our progress, a variety of other efforts must proceed simultaneously.

Consideration and respect for others cannot be learned or taught like the multiplication table. Nevertheless, the schools can help greatly in the cultivation of such attitudes. The extent to which they do so depends not alone on *what they teach* but also on the atmosphere in which the teaching takes place and, of course, on what is considered to be the *purpose of their teaching.*

If education is to help in the attack upon prejudice, there must be changes in its practice as well as in the principles that govern it. Respect for the individual can hardly be taught in a school that practices segregation or employs no teachers from minority groups. And even if the schools were permitted to broaden their programs so that they might become better training grounds for life in a democracy, we need no extensive investigations to tell us that many teachers presently in the public schools are ill-equipped, either by training or inclination, to carry out such a program.

Not enough teachers have a clear notion of the relationship between mental health and mental aptitudes, and fewer still have any idea of the connection between prejudice and personality development. Many teachers still consider the obedient student to be the best student. Many still are more inclined to punish than to investigate the cause of persistent inattention, misbehavior, and failure to learn. Each time they do so, of course, they greatly increase the possibility that their dull or truculent pupils will become even more rebellious and unreasoning adults.

much is being done

In recent years educational leaders and numerous organizations have been working for changes in teaching and teacher education. As a result of their efforts heartening changes have begun to be evident. Many teacher training institutions, for example, have begun to modify their curricula to reflect newer insights into child behavior.

Each year, too, more and more schools, from primary through university level, are incorporating into their basic courses of instruction (in geography, social science, economics, history, etc.) the facts about prejudice and discrimination, their origins and consequences, for the victims as well as for everyone else. The problems as well as the contributions of minority groups are being realistically discussed in more and more classrooms throughout the country. In some communities textbooks have been scanned and, where necessary, retired or overhauled because of hostile or stereotyped references to one or more minority groups.

Community-minded educational groups and education-minded civic groups are hammering home to their members the importance of closer communication between parent and teacher, school and community. For they are increasingly aware that the most enlightened school program can be reduced to a shambles if the community remains hostile to it. The most stimulating curriculum in the hands of the best trained teacher can bewilder rather than benefit the child if he is unable to reconcile those things he learns at school with his observations and experiences away from school.

Today there are more than five hundred local, state, and national agencies working in some way to achieve a reduction of prejudice. Some of these have this as a primary purpose, others are concerned with it only secondarily. Some of these organizations concentrate heavily upon research, others upon education, and still others upon social action and the securing of legislation to prevent discrimination in employment, housing, and education.

Labor unions, veterans and women's groups, civic and youth organizations are also devoting more time and attention to matters of prejudice and discrimination. Trade unions, for some time now, have been conducting intensive educational programs directed to leaders and rank-and-file members, pointing out the cost to the workers of discrimination within their own ranks. Other civic and special interest groups anxious to promote good citizenship have incorporated into their programs a variety of activities to encourage an appreciation and respect for difference. All these are having a significant effect the country over in providing opportunities for fuller participation of minorities in the social, economic, and political life of the nation.

Many ministers have decried the practice of segregation based upon color that still persists in many churches. Still other spiritual leaders have urged that the underlying concepts of the Judeo-Christian tradition be taught more realistically so that they affect the way people think about themselves and each other not only on Sunday, but on every other day of the week as well.

To the extent that they are able to pursue and to progress toward goals such as these (and a great number are doing so), the churches throughout our land add impressively to the not inconsiderable momentum that already exists towards expanding fellowship, greater justice, and growing harmony among all men.

The influence of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, creed, or color is more far-reaching than at first glance it might appear. Without such legislation, minorities would have small chance of escaping from their submerged position. In most of the prejudice expressed toward the Negroes, for example, the

belief in their inferiority is pivotal. But with new and unprecedented opportunities, new and unprecedented achievements have been recorded by members of various minority groups. Their "innate" and "inborn" shortcomings have a remarkable way of disappearing almost as quickly as the prejudice and discrimination against them.

As achievements mount so, too, does self-respect; and this is of paramount importance in the reduction of prejudice, for only the self-respecting can command genuine respect from others.

know the difference

A realistic attack upon prejudice, then, must call forth a thousand attacks upon it. We must perceive the difference between checking the need to hate in the very young and tempering the established prejudices of those already grown; between modifying individual attitudes and modifying the general atmosphere; between changing a person's feelings and changing only his actions. As we are able to gauge the difference between these, we shall become more selective about the battles we take on, more efficient in our preparations for them, and more realistic in our expectations.

If we would keep the young free of prejudice, for example, we must remember how insistent is their need for love as well as for guidance.

To blunt the edges of prejudice in those who are no longer children, we must distinguish between what is flexible and what is fixed in the attitudes of adults. For while we are all faithful to some degree to our earliest teachings, few of us remain unaffected by the influences around us today.

While prejudiced adults have a great deal in common, no two are alike even with respect to their hatreds. As these have a variety of origins, they have also many different natures. Some prejudices may be mild and conciliatory; others may be more deeply rooted and therefore more tenacious. Some people assume the prevailing antipathies because they are too timid to disclaim them; others because they are afraid to face up to their real troubles.

Some would be happier without their prejudices but others might

be miserable were they to be deprived of them. Some of the timid, for example, would shed their prejudices swiftly the moment they observed that almost everyone else was dispensing with theirs. Some of the practical would relinquish their prejudices the moment they were convinced that they had more to gain than to lose by doing so. Some of the intensely hostile may never give up their prejudices, although even they could probably be frightened into silencing them.

Knowing the differences in the origins and the consequences of prejudice, we cannot expect ringing appeals to brotherhood to move those who have nothing but hatred for their brothers. Brotherhood must begin with self-hood, and one who is busy belittling himself or fleeing from himself can hardly be expected to hear or to heed his brothers' cries for help.

Finally, as members of minority groups perceive more clearly the nature of the prejudice felt toward them, they must come to understand that, as they are not the cause of it, neither are they the only casualties resulting from it; that in warding off attacks upon themselves, they are warding off subtle but unmistakable attacks upon others of their countrymen. In their own efforts, then, they cannot but be heartened by the realization that they have many allies from among the "majority" groups in America—people who, because they respect themselves and their country, find it impossible to accept serenely the injustice to so many of their fellow-Americans.

self-respect essential

It is of importance to *all* Americans that minorities understand and respect themselves. For the American does not spring from one nationality or one tribe or one country, but from all the civilized nations on earth. And the most powerful identification Americans have with one another stems not from the similarity of some of their backgrounds but from the variety represented by all of them, and the comforting assurance that theirs is a country that presumes to attach no greater weight to one than to another.

So profound is this identification, in fact, that it is practically impossible for any American to think ill of himself without think-

ing ill of others who are in so many ways like himself. If any American is to respect any other American, he must begin, therefore, by respecting himself. Pride in and respect for one's own heritage become prerequisites for pride in and respect for America.

Respect — not tolerance — must be our goal if we would diminish prejudice in our time.

The issue, therefore, is not who is to tolerate whom, but the grounds on which men should be required to respect one another. The difference is, that where there is to be respect there can be no commitment in advance — either to hate *or* to love. There can be only a commitment to consider each man on the basis of his own merits and his individual qualities. There can be only one promise: to respect all who deserve respect, regardless of race, creed, or color; to permit the same opportunities to all who qualify and to insist that the qualifications required be the same for everyone regardless of race, creed, or color.

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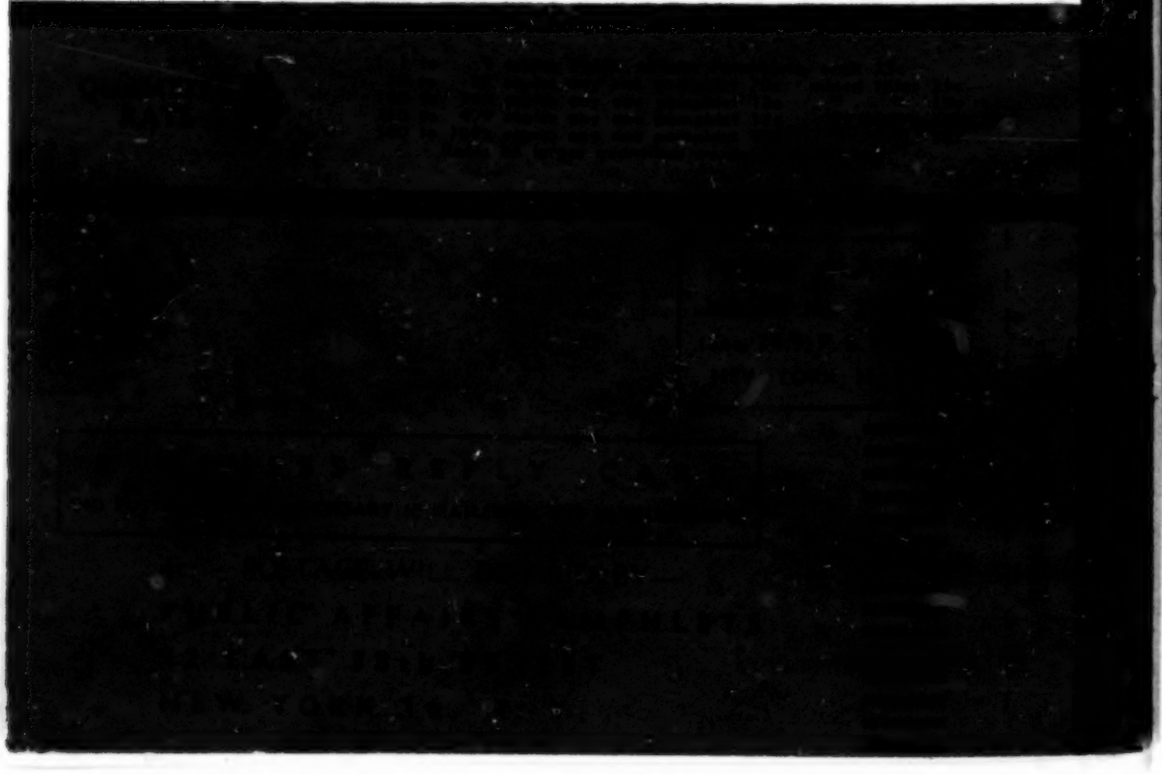

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